

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 0000

INFO USCINCSO

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 4960

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, ES, HO

SUBJECT: LOPEZ'S VIEWS ON F-86 SALES AND HONDURAS/EL SALVADOR

NEGOTIATIONS

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 4958

1. AMBASSADOR HAD CONVERSATION WITH CHIEF OF STATE LOPEZ

EARLY EVENING NOVEMBER 15. AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT
USG CONCERN CONCERNING ARMS INCREASES PARTICULARLY IN
VIEW OF APPARENT ATALEMATE IN HONDURAS/EL SALVADOR
NEGOTIATIONS. HE POSED A QUESTION, RHETORICALLY, WHETHER
OR NOT A STATEMENT OF INTENTION ON THE PART OF THE GOH
IN REGARD TO A DESIRE TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS MIGHT BE
OF HELP IN REGAINING MOMENTUM ON TALKS, AND WHETHER OR
NOT SUCH A STATEMENT MIGHT HELP ALLAY THE FEARS OF ALL CON-
CERNED.

2. CHIEF OF STATE LOPEZ REMARKED THAT THE GOH HAS ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT IT IS NECESSARY TO RESOLVE CONFIDENTIAL

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THE DISPUTE. HE RECALLED PAST EFFORTS TO REACH A SETTLEMENT

AND ARGUED THAT THE MAIN OBSTACLE TO SETTLEMENT HAS BEEN SALVADORAN FEARS OF INTERNAL REACTION TO PEACE SETTLEMENT. HE BLAMED THESE FEARS ON WHAT THE SALVADORAN POLITICIANS WOULD SAY RATHER THAN ON MILITARY OPPOSITION.

3. HE POINTED OUT THAT FONMIN BATRES HAD ARRIVED AT A MEDIATION PROPOSAL WITH FONMIN BORGONOVO ON PERSONAL BASIS. HE SAID THAT THE CABINET HAD RECEIVED CONFLICTING JURDICIAL OPINIONS ABOUT PROPOSAL WHICH CALLED FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A MEDIATOR WHO COULD MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SETTLING THE DISPUTE TO EACH COUNTRY. HE COMMENTED THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN BINDING AND EACH COUNTRY WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ACCEPT OR REJECT THE FINDINGS. HE SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD DECIDED THAT SUCH A PROPOSAL DID NOT GIVE HONDURAS SUFFICIENT GUARANTEES. THEREFORE, THEY HAD DECIDED TO CARRY THE QUESTION TO THE OAS WHERE THERE WOULD BE MECHANISMS AND SAFEGUARDS FOR AN AGREEMENT.

4. LOPEZ SAID THAT GOH DELEGATION WOULD PRESENT A REPORT ON STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS TO COMMITTEE OF SEVEN AND INVOKE THE PROVISIONS OF THE PACT OF BOGOTA IN THE COMING WEEK. HE SAID HE REALIZED THAT THE DENUNCIATION OF THE PACT BY EL SALVADOR WOULD EXPIRE ON NOVEMBER 26, BUT THAT FOR INTERNAL CONSUMPTION THE GOH HAD TO EXERCISE ITS LAST OPTIONS. HE ARGUED THAT WHATEVER THE OUTCOME OF THE WASHINGTON MEETING, TALKS SHOULD CONTINUE IN AN ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE THE DISPUTE.

5. THE AMBASSADOR REITERATED HIS QUESTION REGARDING WHETHER A STATEMENT OR DECLARATION BY HONDURAS TO THE EFFECT THAT FUTURE TALKS WILL BE WELCOMED WOULD BE HELPFUL TO ALL CONCERNED. LOPEZ AGREED AND SAID THAT HE WOULD INSTRUCT ACTING FONMIN PINEDA TO CALL FONMIN BORGONOVO AND ATTEMPT TO ARRANGE A MEETING TO DRAW UP SUCH A DECLARATION. LOPEZ SAID THAT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE IN CONNECTION WITH THE DECEMBER 1 INAUGURATION OF SOMOZA.

6. IN REGARD TO F-86 PURCHASE FROM AEROTRADE INC., LOPEZ AGAIN EXPRESSED HIS ANGER AT WHAT HE CONSIDERED A DECEITFUL CONFIDENTIAL

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TACTIC ON THE PART OF THE COMPANY. THE GOH (PARTICULARLY CHIEF OF THE AIR FORCE SOTO CANO) HAD BEEN TOLD THAT THE COMPANY WOULD BE ABLE TO OBTAIN THE AIRCRAFT WITHOUT REFERENCE TO USG. LOPEZ SAID HE HAD JUST RECEIVED A LETTER FROM AEROTRADE WHICH SAID THAT THE COMPANY IS HAVING TROUBLE IN WASHINGTON IN GETTING LICENSES FOR THE AIRCRAFT.

7. LOPEZ CANDIDLY STATED THAT THE REASON THEY WENT TO THE

COMPANY WAS TO AVOID DIFFICULTIES WITH THE USG IN BUYING ARMAMENTS. HE SAID THAT THE COMPANY NOW WANTS THE GOH TO UTILIZE ITS INFLUENCE TO OBTAIN THE LICENSES. HE SAID THAT HE HAD NOT YET REPLIED TO AEROTRADE'S LETTER AND WOULD DELAY DOING SO FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. HE SAID THAT THE LOGICAL THING NOW WOULD BE TO GO TO THE USG DIRECTLY AND REQUEST THE JETS.

8. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT IT WOULD BE UNWISE TO DENY THE LICENSES FOR THE F-86'S, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE SALVADORAN PURCHASE OF ISRAELI JETS. IN ADDITION, WE BELIEVE AEROTRADE TRANSACTION OR SIMILAR ARRANGEMENT WOULD BE ADVISABLE BECAUSE IT WOULD AVOID INEVITABLE PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM NEED TO APPLY EVENHANDEDNESS POLICY IF THERE IS A DIRECT GOVERNMENTAL SALE. THE AMBASSADOR WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR TALKS ON SUBJECT IF CONSIDERED NECESSARY WHILE IN WASHINGTON ON CONSULTATION WITHIN NEXT TWO WEEKS.

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